



Configuring Netscape

Advice and Suggestions

Figure 1 ➡

The Options menu in Netscape is used to modify and adapt Netscape to your needs. This handout looks at the major options that are available and gives examples of how these options are modified and used.

The menu choices appear as strings with each choice separated by a dash. Look for the next choice on the next menu after selecting the previous one.

<u>O</u> ptions	<u>D</u> irectory	<u>W</u> indow
<u>G</u> eneral Preferences...		
<u>M</u> ail and News Preferences...		
<u>N</u> etwork Preferences...		
<u>S</u> ecurity Preferences...		
✓ <u>S</u> how <u>T</u> oolbar		
Show <u>L</u> ocation		
Show <u>D</u> irectory Buttons		
<u>A</u> uto Load Images		
<u>D</u> ocument <u>E</u> ncoding		

Removing the displayed URL (Netsite), toolbar, and images.

These menu selections are toggles that means selecting them will change their status to the other state. They toggle from on to off or off to on. The check marks signify that they are on.

Options - Show toolbar
 Show Location
 Show Directory
 Auto Load Images

Defaults are: all options are toggled on. They will have a ✓ next to them.

These features can be useful if one needs a screen capture or wants to maximize the amount of content displayed. If all of these features are turned off more display area is available, but the ease of maneuvering is greatly reduced. Removing the graphics from the pages that are displayed will allow them to load more quickly and show what a non-graphical browser user would see.

The following choices are from the General Preferences menu (see figure 1). The following tab bar appears at the top of the next screen after selecting General Preferences (see figure 2).

Figure 2 ➡



Appearance

Options - General Preferences - Appearance

Toolbar

Show Main Toolbar as:

This file menu allows one to change the toolbar to be pictures, text, or pictures and text.

Default is: Pictures and Text

Startup

On Startup Launch:

If one uses Netscape as a usenet news reader or pop mail client it can check the server for new news or new mail on startup. It can launch one, two, or all of the options.

Default is: Netscape Browser

Browser Starts With:

The options include starting with a blank page or a specific home page. This home page can be either remote or local. If your institution does not have a homepage or a local file would be more suited to the users needs one can create a file on the hard drive and use it as the startup page. If the URL of a page is known one can enter it (don't forget the http://) and the browser will open to it each time the browser is started. The bookmark file can also be displayed as the home page.

The file is in C:\netscape\bookmarks.htm for PC

Default is: Netscape's home page - <http://home.netscape.com/>

Link Styles

Links are:

The underlining on the links can be turned off if having them a different color is enough to distinguish them.

Default is: Checked

Followed Links:

Netscape remembers if it has been to a specific location by recording it in the netscape.hst file.

Netscape will automatically change the color of links to show that they have been visited according to the option selected in this section. The 'Expire Now' option is useful if one is doing a presentation and wants to show what unvisited links look like or if some kind of screen capture is used to display or print a page it will give all of the links the same color.

Default is: Expire after 9 days

Fonts

Options - General Preferences - Fonts

Fonts and Encodings

For the Encoding:

This option allows one to change the character set. It is used with foreign languages and for special characters.

Default is: Latin1

Use the Proportional Font

Any font that is available on the computer may be selected. Changing the font will change the way a page displays on the browser. Most people do not change their font.

Default is: Times New Roman - Size 12

Use the Fixed Font

See the “use the proportional font section”.

Default is: Courier New - Size 10

If the browser is used as presentation software the font size may need to be increased so that it is visible to people in the back of the room. If a user has vision problems it allows one to increase the font size so that they can use the browser.

Colors

Options - General Preferences - Colors

Colors, Links, Followed Links, Text, and Background

All of these options are customizable. When the choose color button is pressed a color palette will display and allow a choice of a color or to select a custom color. It will allow selection of color combinations that do not work. For example if the text and the background are red the text will be unreadable..

Defaults are: Links - Blue, Followed Links - Red, Text - Black, and Background - grey

Always Use My Colors, Overriding the Document

This allows one to create a uniform interface. This can be problematic if the web sites have graphics that fade or blend into the background with the specified colors selected. This can be useful when printing pages that have white text and a black background. This feature forces it to use standard colors.

Default is: unchecked

Images

Options - General Preferences - Images

Choosing Colors:

Automatic, attempts to determine the most appropriate type of image display. Dither or Substitute Colors attempts to most closely match the computer's available colors. Dithered images may offer a closer match to an image's intended colors, but take longer to display.

Default is: Automatic

Display Images:

Default is: While Loading



Apps

Options - General Preferences - Apps

Telnet Application:

This option allows one to point to the telnet client on the computer. This allows the browser to start the telnet software when a “telnet://” link is selected. When configured it will allow one to connect to a remote computer and carry on an interactive session with it. For example, one could create a link to your email host on your home page.

Default is : None. This option must be configured by the user.

TN3270 Application:

This option is for people who connect to IBM mainframes. It points to the special telnet software needed to connect and interact with the IBM mainframes.

Default is : None. This option must be configured by the user.

View Source:

This option points to a program and uses it to view the source code of the web page that is displayed. This option can be used to point to an HTML editor or Word Processing software and make editing of web pages easier.

Default is : None. This option must be configured by the user.

Temporary Directory:

This option allows a directory to be specified for temporary files. These files are used and then discarded when the browser is closed. C:\temp is the recommended directory.

Default is : None. This option must be configured by the user.

Helpers

Options - General Preferences - Helpers

These settings allow the browser to start trusted programs when given file types are encountered. This means that if a file type that has a helper defined is selected it will launch the other program and use it to view the file. Instructions on how to configure for specific file types are usually available at the site that the helper application is located at.

Default is: Netscape provides some built in helpers, but this varies with the version.

Language

Options - General Preferences - Language

This option allows viewing of pages in other languages. The left list is the available languages and the right side is what has been selected.

Default was: Determined by Netscape when the software was sold or downloaded.

The following choices are from the General Preferences menu (see figure 1). The following tab bar appears at the top of the next screen after selecting Mail and News Preferences (see figure 3).

Figure 3



Servers

 Options - Mail and News Preferences - Servers

Mail

Outgoing Mail Server: This option will have to be filled to use mailto URLs.

Incoming Mail Server: This option is for people using the Post Office Protocol or POP mail. It allows them to use their browser as a mail client.

News

News Server: The host's name needs to be filled in to use the news client.

Note: You may need to contact the systems people to get the servers IP address for each of these options.

Defaults are: None. These options must be configured by the user.

Identity

 Options - Mail and News Preferences - Identity

Your Name: Give your first and last name.

Your Email: Give your full email address. Ex bvogh@umabnet.ab.umd.edu

Note: These two must be filled in to use a mailto URL from the browser.

Reply to Address: Give if different from your email address. If you want the replies to go to a different server than the one specified above.

Your Organization: This option does not have to be filled in.

Signature File: This option allows the browser to insert a file in every email that is sent. It should include contact information and be an ASCII text file.

Defaults are : None. These options must be configured by the user.

The following choices are from the General Preferences menu (see figure 1). The following tab bar appears at the top of the next screen after selecting Network Preferences (see figure 4).

Figure 4



Cache

Options - Network Preferences - Cache

The Cache is a place in the Random Access Memory (RAM) in the case of “Memory Cache” and on the hard drive for the “Disk Cache”. This space is reserved for Netscape to temporarily store files. If the file is in the cache, memory or disk, it will display it instead of going out on the network and getting it again. This is designed to save on the network and to be a time saver for the user. The size of this pool of files is determined by altering the Memory and disk Cache file size.

Disk Cache: This should be cleared periodically depending on browser usage to improve performance. The browser looks in the cache to see if the file is there. The more files that are there the more it has to look through. It is best to clear it before a live presentation to improve the speed.

Disk Cache Directory: This determines where the disk cache files are stored.

Verify Documents: The cache is checked when a link is clicked on. If the file in the cache (memory or disk) is older than the once selected the browser will get the newer version from the remote server and if not it will load the cached document. The settings allow one to choose how often a file will be checked.

Allow Persistent Caching of Pages Retrieved through SSL: The SSL stands for Secure Sockets Layer. This technology allows the information exchanged between the browser and the server to be secure. This would allow the browser to store and redisplay pages that were retrieved through a secure transaction. See the discussion under General under Security Preferences in the following pages.

Defaults are: Memory - 600K, Disk - 5000K, Directory - C:\Netscape\Cache, Verify - Once, and SSL Cache - unchecked

Proxies

Options - Network Preferences - Proxies

Proxy servers are used with firewalls. This security feature allows one access to the web with out compromising the security of the institution. The browser points to the proxy server(s) and the information is passed through it, checked, and then received by the browser. Talk to the systems people for information about proxy addresses.

For a discussion and further information about security try:

<http://yoda.unl.edu/Network.html>

It is a good source of information and is very comprehensible.

Defaults are: No Proxies. These options must be configured by the user.

Protocols

Options - Network Preferences - Protocols

These are the security protocols that are used. These options determine how much information about the user is given to others.

Accepting a Cookie: Cookies keep track of site visits and information that is sent to the server.

This information is written to the hard drive in the file cookie.txt in C:\Netscape.



The server that wrote the cookie can use the information on later visits. If this option is checked it will give the user the opportunity to refuse a cookie before it is written.

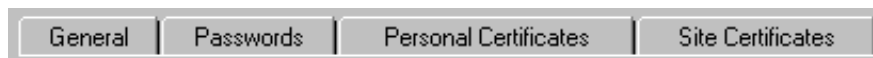
Submitting a Form by Email: This option will prompt the user and remind them that this is not a secured transmission and that others may access the information that they are sending in the email.

Send Email Address as Anonymous FTP Password: This option allows one to use the email address specified above for the password during anonymous FTP or to be completely anonymous.

Defaults are: Cookie - unchecked, Email - checked, and FTP- unchecked

The following choices are from the General Preferences menu (see figure 1). The following tab bar appears at the top of the next screen after selecting Security Preferences (see figure 5).

Figure 5



General



Options - Security Preferences - General

These features are set up to protect sensitive information and to make the user aware of their security status, secure or insecure, while using web resources. The secure transaction is needed for commerce on the web. A secure resource is encrypted and sent to the browser. The information that is sent back to them is also encrypted and then sent. A secure file will display a thin blue line at the top of the browser window. The security status of a file is also visible in the bottom right corner.

The broken key means insecure. 

The unbroken key means secure. 

The settings for these options determine if the user is notified with a dialog box of the security status of a particular item.

Entering a Secure Document Space:

Leaving a Secure Document Space:

Viewing a Document With a Secure/Insecure Mix:

Submitting a Form Insecurely:

These options implement the Secure Socket Layer Protocol. This protocol allows one to send and receive information securely by sending encrypted documents to and from the server.

Enable SSL v2:

Enable SSL v3:

Defaults are: Entering - Checked, Leaving - checked, Viewing Sec/Ins - checked, Submit Form - Checked, SSL v2 - Checked, and SSL v3 - Checked

This document was written for Netscape 3.0 used on a PC. Macintosh instructions may vary.

A similar document at

<http://home.netscape.com/eng/mozilla/3.0/handbook/docs/panels.html#C6>
gives more information about configuration of the options for all systems.